REMARKS

In the Office Action of March 31, 2008, the drawings were objected to because Figs. 1-4 lack descriptive labels. In addition, claims 7-14 were objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.75(c) as allegedly being in improper form for multiple dependent claims. Furthermore, claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,154,061 ("Boezen et al.") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,475,687 ("Markkula et al.").

With respect to the drawing objection, Applicant respectfully declines to add descriptive legends. The drawing requirements for U.S. National Stage applications are identified in MPEP 1825 and descriptive labels are not required (see PCT Rule 11.11). In particular, Applicant submits that the addition of descriptive legends to the drawings is not "**indispensible** for understanding," as required under PCT Rule 11.11, because the individual drawing elements are identified by reference numbers and described in the specification. Consequently, Applicant respectfully asserts that descriptive labeling is not "indispensible", and thus, is not required in the drawings of the current application pursuant to PCT Rule 11.11. As such, Applicant respectfully requests that the drawing objection be withdrawn.

With respect to the objections to claims 7-14, Applicant notes that claims 7 and 8 are not multiple dependent claims. Thus, claims 7 and 8 should have been examined on the merits. As such, Applicant respectfully requests that these dependent claims be addressed in a subsequent non-final Office Action or in a Notice of Allowance. Applicant has also amended claims 9-14 to remove any multiple dependencies. As such, Applicant respectfully requests that the objections to claims 9-14 be withdrawn and examined on the merits.

With respect to the rejections of claims 1-6, Applicant respectfully requests that the independent claim 1 is not obvious in view of the cited references of Boezen et al. and Markkula et al., as explained below. In view of the claim amendments and the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests that the pending claims 1-14 be allowed.

Applicant notes herein that claims 1-14 have been amended to remove reference letters and numbers and/or to make minor changes.

A. Patentability of Amended Independent Claims 1 and 4

As amended, the independent claim 1 recites in part *"characterized in that the system is changed over from the subnetwork operation to the full network operation through the detection of at least one defined, especially continuous and/or especially symmetrical signal level pattern in the data traffic on the system,"* where the full network operation is described as *"in which all the nodes and/or all the users of the system are addressed and/or activated by the signal level of the data traffic on the system."* These limitations are not disclosed in the cited references of Boezen et al. and Markkula et al. Thus, Applicant respectfully asserts that the amended independent claim 1 is not obvious in view of the cited references of Boezen et al. and Markkula et al., and requests that the amended independent claim 1 be allowed.

The Office Action on page 4 correctly states that the cited reference of Boezen et al. "fails to disclose a method of subnetting or symmetrical output signals." The Office Action then states that the cited reference of Markkula et al. "discloses a network and intelligent cell for providing sensing, bidirectional communications and control comprising a serially networked system, in particular a serial databus system, a subnetwork operation (column 7 lines 4-19), in which at least one node and/or at least one user of the system is in a state of reduced current consumption and is not addressed and/or not activated, a full network operation (column 12 lines 26-60), and detection of a symmetrical signal level pattern in the data traffic of the system (column 16 lines 17-59)."

First of all, the cited reference of Markkula et al. does not disclose *"subnetwork operation, in which at least one node and/or at least one user of the system is **in a state of reduced current consumption**"* (emphasis added), as recited in the amended independent claim 1. In column 12, lines 26-60, the cited reference of Markkula et al. describes a grouping method in a network in which group and cell ASCII names have been assigned. However, the cited passage of Markkula et al. does

not disclose any node or user that is *"in a state of reduced current consumption,"* as recited in the amended independent claim 1.

In addition, the cited reference of Markkula et al. does not disclose the limitations of *"characterized in that the system is changed over from the subnetwork operation to the full network operation through the detection of at least one defined, especially continuous and/or especially symmetrical signal level pattern in the data traffic on the system,"* as recited in the amended independent claim 1. The cited passages of Markkula et al. fail to disclose any process of changing the system from a subnetwork operation to a full network operation, as defined in the amended independent claim 1. Furthermore, the cited passages of Markkula et al. fail to disclose any detection of a continuous and/or symmetrical signal level pattern to change the system from a subnetwork operation to a full network operation, as defined in the amended independent claim 1. In column 16, lines 17-59, the cited reference of Markkula et al. describes coding using different patterns of bits. However, these patterns are not used to change the system from a subnetwork operation to a full network operation. Therefore, the cited reference of Markkula et al. does not disclose the limitations of *"characterized in that the system is changed over from the subnetwork operation to the full network operation through the detection of at least one defined, especially continuous and/or especially symmetrical signal level pattern in the data traffic on the system,"* as recited in the amended independent claim 1.

Since the cited references of Boezen et al. and Markkula et al. fail to disclose all the claim limitations, the amended independent claim 1 is not obvious over Boezen et al. in view of Markkula et al. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the amended independent claim 1 be allowed.

The above remarks are also applicable to the amended independent claim 4, which recites limitations similar to those of the amended independent claim 1. Consequently, the amended independent claim 4 is also not obvious in view of the cited references of Boezen et al. and Markkula et al. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the amended independent claim 4 be allowed as well.

B. Patentability of Dependent Claims 2, 3 and 5-14

Each of the dependent claims 2-3 and 5-14 depends on one of the amended independent claims 1 and 4. As such, these dependent claims include all the

5 limitations of their respective base claims. Therefore, Applicant submits that these dependent claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as their respective base claims. Additionally, each of claims 2, 3 and 5-14 may be allowable for further reasons.

10 As an example, the dependent claim 2 recites *"characterized in that the signal level pattern does not otherwise occur in the data traffic,"* which is not disclosed in the cited reference of Markkula et al. The Office Action on page 5 alleges that "Boezen et al., as modified by Markkula et al, further discloses a method characterized in that the signal level pattern does not otherwise occur in the data

15 traffic (Markkula et al., column 5 lines 19-38)." However, Applicant fails to see how the cited passage of Markkula et al. disclose such a claim limitation since the cited passage merely describes transmission and reception of messages (data traffic) between the cells 27 and 28. Consequently, the dependent claim 2 is not obvious over Boezen et al. in view of Markkula et al. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the

20 dependent claim 2 be allowed.

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the claims in view of the remarks made herein. A notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

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Respectfully submitted,
Matthias Muth

Date: June 30, 2008   By: /thomas h. ham/
30   Thomas H. Ham
                                 Registration No. 43,654
                                 Telephone: (925) 249-1300